

Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes: January 30, 2008

Members present:

Laurie Cannon, Environmental Advisory Committee Chair
Frank C. Cosentino, FMERPA Executive Director
Diane Canterbury, FMERPA Project Manager
Public Member Rosemarie Estephan, FMERPA
Public Member Faith Teitelbaum, Sierra Club
Fran Varacalli (representing Public Member Adele Keller)

Guests present:

Frank Barricelli
Joe Fallon, U.S. Army
Patrick Hoosay, Stockton College
Wanda Green, U.S. Army, Ft. Monmouth
Tom Mahedy
Greg Pollack, Weston Solutions
Dan Schnepf, Matrix Design Group
Steven Young, Matrix Design Group

The meeting convened at 7:38 p.m.

Dan Schnepf and Steve Young from Matrix Design Group started the meeting with a presentation on what they have completed as far as information gathering on the environmental conditions at Fort Monmouth. They reviewed the approach they will be taking on the project and explained what the Data Gap Analysis is and why it is important throughout the process.

Reasons for the Data Gap Analysis include: in the event a mistake is made by the Army; the Army is not responsible for higher standard of clearing and data; a desire to go beyond all regulators clean-up requirements.

Dan and Steve talked about the global issues involved in any project like this, as they have worked on many BRAC projects across the country and have a great deal of experience. Their goal is proper clean up for the community and ultimately, the transference of the land for redevelopment.

Dan and Steve spoke of how the approach to the project is both "evolutionary" and "revolutionary". Before the BRAC 2005 round, many of the base closings were learning experiences for all involved. By the time the BRAC 2005 round was announced, Dan Schnepf from Matrix had the opportunity to make a presentation to Congress on how this whole process could be done better. One of the things that was learned over the years is that re-use scenarios that are most likely to work involve plans that call for "like-use". That way, you can minimize the conflict and reduce the costs. In other words, it's very important to craft a plan that is consistent with the original use of the land, ie: leave a residential area, residential and an industrial area, industrial, whenever possible). In this project, there is a good amount of data compared to other BRAC closings, because of the diligent approach of the Army at Fort Monmouth. There is actually a law now called CERCLA that states that

environmental clean up must meet a standard that is consistent with the property's historical use. In discussing the Data Gap Analysis, Dan and Steve both spoke of reviewing aerial photos, the history of soil sampling efforts, monitoring of wells, etc. They pointed out that Matrix is not a stakeholder: their responsibility is to make sure the property is cleaned up thoroughly and properly for the good of the community and FMERPA. Their job is also to "inform" the plan: they communicate what is going on environmentally in each piece of property so the planners can move in the right direction. They are making all their decisions based on the environmental considerations of the site.

They also spoke a lot about how we can protect ourselves against future liability events. First there is a Hazardous Material Plan which is agreed to ahead of time by the State of New Jersey and the Federal Government. Next, there are deed restrictions and land use controls. After that, you still have the CERCLA protections: clean up requirements between the State and Federal Government. Under CERCLA there is a callback provision applicable no matter how long after disposition. Beyond that, only contractors that are certified, qualified, bonded and insured are used on the project. Equally important is cost-cap insurance for known problems and pollution legal liability insurance for any unknown problems.

Joe Fallon, U.S. Army, added that by having their own lab on site, Fort Monmouth has been able to sample more frequently than the NJDEP even requires them to and he has saved the army \$7 to 8 million dollars in lab costs.

On global issues, such as landfills, Dan and Steve (Matrix) stated that they will most likely remain as open space. They do not intend for the plan to build anything on them. As for long-term study of plumes, they will continually review where they are moving, what their potential pathways are, and what their receptors could be. In the case of monitoring wells: some will be able to close as the NJDEP grants NFAs but some will have to remain for long-term monitoring. Closing costs associated with the wells will have to be factored in as well as continuation of sampling costs for those that remain in operation. The issue of privatization of clean up was discussed, which Matrix favors. The most important issue in all of this is proper clean up for the transference of land. This is one of the biggest shifts in philosophy of clean ups since the 2005 BRAC round of closures. Clean up is looked at in a "qualitative" way now rather than "quantitative". Doing it correctly the first time is much more cost effective for everyone.

Next on the agenda was a reminder of the landfill tour that the committee will participate in on Wednesday, February 20, 2008 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.. The committee is especially interested in the landfills with stream banks. If you are a member of the committee, please confirm your attendance with Diane Canterbury with FMERPA.

The committee was pleased to have Professor Patrick Hoosay, who teaches Sustainability and Environmental Policy at Stockton College in attendance at our meeting. He has agreed to attend future meetings to guide us with information on sustainable and green businesses/ community sustainability, planning, usage, lead certification, zero discharge buildings. His advice was that if we could do it, we should explore a total approach rather than building by building. He added that Stockton College has the largest geo-thermal facilities in the state of New Jersey.

The next Environmental Committee Meeting will be held on February 26, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. at the FMERPA office/conference room. This will be posted on the FMERPA website and reminder notices will go out before the meeting.

The meeting ended at 9:35 p.m.